

**RE Council Minutes**  
**Sunday, Apr 18, 2021**  
**Zoom 12:15**

Attending: Benita, Mia, Delino, Chris, Callie, Eric, Carol, Nicia

Chalice Lighting

**Administrative**

- February Minutes (attached) approved (no meeting in March)

**Discussion**

- Fun Game Night with online Escape Rooms and Scavenger Hunts
- Easter Can Drive was very successful! We didn't count the donations, but they filled up two carts!
- Format Parents of Preschoolers to see if it makes for a better session.
- Special messaging on the First UU Families FB page for Earth Month (3/22 (World Water Day)- April 22 (Earth Day)
- As MDD LREDA Chair, Mia conducted a rejuvenating virtual retreat, and now is in the advisory position of Past Chair.

**Review our Vision Statement**

The UUA has been putting out articles meant to prepare us for trying to figure out the who, what, when, where, why and how of figuring out how to be in community again, and I was remembering that it's been 6 years since we created our vision statement. Our current circumstances may warrant a revision. In preparing to consider revising our Vision Statement, here's an article I thought would be good information for those of you on the RE Council to consider.

(Please read prior to our meeting)

<https://www.uua.org/leadership/library/covid-family-ministry>

<https://www.uua.org/files/documents/congservices/visionmissioncovenant.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0-F6WpqjjkK6mBT7cOFIHqAmTA1RfbLbmjqzsTyJ2eOtbyW6vnITVGUj0>

First Unitarian RE Vision Statement:

Through participating in the Religious Education program at First Unitarian, children and youth will:

- Develop social skills and connections that will make them a part of this church community.
- Participate in practical experiences that relate to UU Principles, and that will expand into their daily lives.
- Incorporate UU beliefs into their own beliefs that they can articulate.
- Learn about, appreciate, and respect people of other faiths and beliefs.
- Develop a spiritual foundation that will provide perspective throughout their life journey.

Suggestions:

- change “program” to “programs” (plural).
- we never used to have programming for adults. But now, we have parents of preschoolers who are about to start the sexuality educators’ class, etc. With the pandemic, the parents need us. We have evolved into a family ministry church, so would like to change the language to reflect that.
- *Understand their role in a diverse and inclusive world*
- Most important thing we can do as RE teachers is make it fun enough that kids want to come back. Key word is connections. Adults connect in same way. So maybe add a bullet point that highlights connections.
- We’re based on community connection. Don’t want to spell out HOW we do something. Maybe add to the first statement “children, youth *and their families*”.
- change “them” to “*families*”. In first bullet.
- in second bullet, principles *and sources*.
- Callie: do we want something on inclusivity/diversity?
- Rather not add to 4<sup>th</sup> bullet, as don’t want to “other”.
- how about: *Continue to develop a more diverse and inclusive community*. Make this a separate bullet.
- *Understanding their role in a diverse and inclusive world. (or community?)*

Goal to finish vision statement by June Meeting. Mia will send statement out so members can work on it for the May meeting.

## Is the Council effective?

As we contemplate the work of this coming year, is the Council's purpose changing? DREs were asked to rate, in order of importance, what they think the purpose of their Council is:

1. To help envision the program
2. To advocate
3. To be a sounding board
4. To be hands and feet

Different councils, etc have different needs. In some small churches the main job is to envision the program. Mia's order of priority was: 4,3,2,1

- What might we be able to do, to keep our community together?
  - How can we be more part of the general community?
  - Have various ideas to discuss with the minister.
  - Concerned about silo-ing and its effect on volunteering.
  - concerns about our extremely protestant model. Form
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## Portfolio Reports (attached)

- Alana
- Delino
- Carol
- Camp

### Alana's Youth Report (given by Chris)

\* All Youth check-ins continue to go well, with steady attendance. For Earth Day we are (hopefully) collaborating with Earth Web to talk about our 7th Principle and how to get involved.

\* coming of age is ending on the 25th with the beloved COA service. This year has been challenging with meeting on Zoom, but the advisors have done a good job adapting.

\* Mia and are will be starting Parents and Caregivers as sexuality educators this month as well. This is a small group ministry aimed at helping parents learn how to talk to their kids about sexuality. We will meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays every month, for 10 sessions. April 27<sup>th</sup> start date. Tuesday evening 7:30-9.

\* I attended Finding Our Way Home, a gathering of religious professionals of color. It was a wonderful experience and I plan to attend again. I am also an adult sponsor for the PWR Youth

Spring Con through the month of April. One youth from our congregation are attending, and one of our youth advisors. PWR = Pacific Western is the region we're in.

\* I am still undecided whether or not there will be programming for youth over the summer. At the very least there will be Minecraft and social events.

### **Delino's Community Report**

In terms of the community portfolio: the last game night was a pretty good success. We had a decent amount of turnout and people seemed to have enjoyed it. For the next event I would like to do a bingo night (which I know Mia would also like), but I'm not positive how much demand there would be for this, especially among the younger kids.

### **Carol's Curriculum Report**

Nissane Capps continues as doorkeeper while I take attendance for the Children's Zoom meetings. Attendance is consistent with 5 to 12 people. I posted 12 pages of reference (Grade 2-5 curriculum) for March and April in the Soul Matters Google folder. Mia created the lessons using some of this material in Sunday morning programming and in the Bitmoji classroom.

The four lessons from Soul Matters for the March theme of Commitment were average. Zoom Sunday School met three times in March. I offered additional ideas for the first lesson, Commitment to Curiosity. Mia provided supplementary materials for Commitment to Change. The lesson Commitment to Conscience worked well and was used as is. The Commitment to Compassion Lesson was not used.

The April theme of Becoming generated more child participation than any other theme. The Easter Lesson based on Patricia Polacco's book Chicken Sunday provided great talking points on Becoming. The story offered a great example of what UUs seek with the proposed 8th Principle: We work together for diversity and against racism & oppression. On April 11, through the story: Share Your Gifts and the Video: "Let It Go" the children identified with the ideas of "Who are you becoming?" and becoming confident in yourself. One child who never speaks during class had a great deal to say about this lesson. The Earth Day lesson will work since our kiddos have a firm knowledge of the 7th Principle: We care for our planet. My opinion is that the 4th lesson's materials on Making Hopeful Predictions are weak.

I am currently working on Story, the theme for May. My grade level suggestions are available before the month begins so that Mia can use them in putting together the Bitmoji classroom and lessons for the month. Mia and I continue to exchange ideas concerning REs return to meeting in person.

### **Nicia's Camp Report**

Alana and Meghan met with the COVID Advisory Council to get some guidance on what would be safe for camp this year. Considering there is not yet a vaccine available for children, the possibility of being in settings (like meals) with other groups who are from out of state is high, and sleeping arrangements would be difficult to handle, it is of the

advice from the Council that sleep-away camp be postponed another year. However, realizing that kids and youth have been overwhelmed with virtual...everything, we are going to work on a camp experience that has no to little virtual components. We plan to meet again to figure out what our options reasonable are, then send out a survey to families to get an understanding of what their comfort levels are.